

## Soccer Goals:

# Soldiers Keep Promise to Village, Gain Trust

By Sgt. Christina Rockhill  
1st Cavalry Division PAO

ABU ETHA, Iraq — The Soldiers kicked around the idea for a month, trying to figure out how they would fulfill a promise that was made before they had even stepped foot into Iraq.

"It was a promise made by the [82nd Airborne Division]," said 1st Lt. Hanibl Olmeda, a platoon leader for 68th Chemical Company of the 1st Cavalry Division. "For the past four or five months they were stating that they were going to get a soccer goal and soccer field and soccer balls and it never happened."

The tiny village of Abu Etha was a hostile area for Soldiers up until a month ago when First Team troopers started doing daily patrols in the area.

"When we first arrived, the locals were very afraid, very nervous of our presence because this village had seen a lot of turmoil and a lot of raids in the past," Capt. Ben Ring, company commander of Co. A, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, said. "The villagers



By Sgt. Christina Rockhill, 1st Cavalry Division PAO

**A local Iraqi girl from Abu Etha helps Soldiers and her playmates hold up a soccer net so that it doesn't get tangled before First Team Soldiers put up the soccer net.**

now are friendly. Since we've come here, over the past 6 weeks, we've been very friendly and we've engaged the populace, and now the kids run up to our vehicles and greet us with cheers."

The turnaround of the vil-

lage is especially significant for the safety of the Soldiers. Before they started their patrols, the roads near the village were littered with improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

"The road we're going on right now had seven IEDs in a

week," Ring said. "Since we started operations in that village, we've detained one person who was the cell leader for the whole terrorist cell in the area. Then we've pretty much treated [the villagers] kindly

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## Al-Jawheri School Soccer Team Receives Equipment

By 1st Brigade Combat Team  
Public Affairs

Three teams from the Al-Jawheri Intermediate School were given soccer uniforms from the local Neighborhood Advisory Council, Women and Children Committee and coalition forces to replace the neces-

sary equipment they were lacking. Company C, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment worked with the NAC to provide the teams uniforms, cleats and socks.

Command Emergency Response Program funds were utilized to purchase the uni-

forms and equipment for all three teams.

"This project is one small way to have a visible, positive impact in the community and [it] held great potential for public relation exposure," 1st Lt. Raymond Gonzalez, information officer with Co. C, 2-8 Cav., said. "This type of proj-

ect helps meet the recreational needs of the children in the area by providing a healthy distraction and a safe alternative to life on the streets."

In the future, the members of the NAC would like to add other schools to the list of successfully completed projects.



# Community Effort, Teamwork Accomplish Mission

**Continued from Page 1**  
and given them candy and just talked to them and we haven't had any IEDs on the road ever since."

When Ring learned of the promise, he started working with his team to get soccer goals for the children. He said it started out as a simple project, and he had some local Iraqis build him the goals from scratch. He was surprised when he found out that the goals were a little larger than he had expected.

"It was a little shocking at first. We asked for soccer goals and somehow we got regulation international-standard size

soccer goals," Ring said. "But when you put them on the field, the kids see them and you dig them into the ground a little bit, it doesn't make that big of a difference."

When the Soldiers pulled into the village with the enormous goals, kids came running from down the road. Soon a large crowd formed around the Soldiers as they prepared to unload. Men from the village helped carry the metal posts and little kids gathered picks and shovels to dig holes for the poles to sit in. Other children rushed to get wheel barrels they would fill with concrete to



**Local Iraqis watch as Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment and 68th Chemical Company put up a soccer goal for the children of the village of Abu Etha. The Soldiers come to the little village every other day to do patrols and visit the children.**

set the posts into the ground. The community gathered with the Soldiers to set up the soccer field. As the plan came together, five and six-year-old kids helped unravel the fluorescent green soccer net, and everyone wore huge smiles.

"This is pretty much what it's all about," Ring said. "Our mission here in Iraq can be tiresome. It can be difficult and very arduous, but it's events like these that really make it worthwhile. When you see the expressions on kids faces as you arrive with soccer goals

and they are cheering, it really

warms your heart."

The Soldiers also handed out t-shirts, candy, school supplies and toys that were donated from friends and family back in the states.

"It's definitely making a difference," 2nd Lt. Brandon Titus, of 1-8 Cav., said. "It's amazing what a smile and saying hi and just getting to know the people will do; it's great."

The Soldiers left behind a bright blue soccer ball for the children and left the little village knowing they had made a difference.



Photos by Sgt. Christina Rockhill, 1st Cavalry Division PAO

**1st Lt. Hanibl Olmeda, a platoon leader for 68th Chemical Company, hands out donated toys, school supplies and t-shirts to the villagers of Abu Etha.**

## Useful Iraqi Words/Phrases

Do you speak English?

taaraf taH-chee in-gee-zee?

**Monday**

High: 90

Low: 70



**Tuesday**

High: 92

Low: 72



**Wednesday**

High: 95

Low: 72



Weather information provided by 1CD Staff Weather Office

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# On the Home Front

May 17, 2004

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## Attendees at Freedom Fest Show Support for Soldiers

► From *Fort Hood Sentinel*

KILLEEN, Texas- Smiles were certainly bountiful at Saturday's Freedom Fest in Conder Park, but it was obvious many hearts were elsewhere.

Children held a parent's hand, but many of the mothers and fathers were not there, some being in the military deployed to Iraq.

Many in the community, however, wanted to show their support on this Armed Forces Day for the military families who are dealing with a deployment.

"Everything that is going on is to benefit the Fort Hood situation," said Jimmie Fernandez, a maintenance inspector with Century 21 Team Wheatley, which sponsored the Killeen festival.

Proceeds from the event are going to support the Fisher House, which helps Soldiers and their families, and also Easter Seals of Central Texas.

The Freedom Fest included music, moon walks, a dunking booth, trackless children's train, carnival games, prize raffles and various food vendors.

Performers included the Ira Cross Elementary School Stompin' Bulldogs, the Karen & Donna School of Dance, Gem Karate Studio and The Praise Team Dancers.

Recent "Star Search" runner-up Spensha Baker sang the national anthem.

Fernandez, whose brother Steve is in Iraq with COSCOM, ran a football throwing booth with his wife, Heather, a property manager with Century 21.

"It is awesome," Fernandez said of the event.

The families of the



Killeen Daily Herald

**Joey Goode gasps for breath as he rises above the water after a drop in the dunk tank Saturday at Freedom Fest in Killeen's Conder Park.**

Soldiers deployed and the troops who've returned deserve the support from the community, he said.

"Someone has to support them," he said.

Jerry Worley and his 11-year-old daughter, Kelsey, a dancer with the Karen & Donna School of Dance, said he thought the Freedom Fest was especially good for the children who have a mom or dad serving in Iraq. "It helps them keep their mind off of mom or dad being gone," he said. "We probably ought to have more of (the festivals)."

Jennifer Miller, who brought her home-based business PartyLite to the fest, sold candles and party favors. "I think it is wonderful," said Miller, who is also a counselor at West Ward Elementary School. "It is great for the families."

Troy Zirkle, 2½, seemed to

echo Miller's comments. He took advantage of almost every game, and the orange soda mark above his upper lip curved upward like his smile.

Hagler, who is a retired first sergeant and currently a contractor with Johnson Controls on Fort Hood, said he thought the fest was good for the community and for the morale of the Soldiers.

When he came from his two years in Vietnam, there wasn't any kind of community support, he said.

"When I came back, there was no welcome home," Hagler said. "When I got off the plane at the L.A. airport, I got spit on and called a baby killer."

However you feel about the reasoning for war, the troops deserve the support, he said.

## Today in History

May 17

► From [historychannel.com](http://historychannel.com)

**1863 Battle of Big Black River, Miss.**

**1943 The *Memphis Belle* flies its 25th bombing mission**

**1954 The U.S. Supreme Court hands down a unanimous decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, ruling that segregation in public educational facilities is unconstitutional**

**1970 Norwegian ethnologist Thor Heyerdahl and a multinational crew set off across the Atlantic Ocean in *Ra II*, a papyrus sailing craft modeled after ancient Egyptian sailing vessels**

**1973 Televised Watergate hearings begin**

**1990 Last episode of prime-time soap opera *Falcon Crest* airs**

**1992 Bandleader Lawrence Welk dies**

**1994 Al Unser Sr. announced his retirement from auto racing, ending one of the greatest Indy Car careers of all time**

## Today in Cav History

**1968 - Operation JEB STUART III begins.**

**1968 - Operation CONCORDIA SQUARE ends.**

**1968 - Operation DELAWARE, which was concentrated on the Laotian border, ended as 1st and 3rd Brigades moved from the A Shau Valley back to Camp Evans, located northwest of Hue in Vietnam.**



## ► The Stage is Set



Smarty Jones, with jockey Stewart Elliott on board, lead the field by 11-1/2 lengths to win Saturday's Preakness Stakes in Pimlico, Md. Smarty Jones is expected to run in the third leg of horse racing's Triple Crown, the Belmont Stakes June 5. The Triple Crown was last won in 1978 by Affirmed.



Antonio Tarver of Orlando celebrates his victory over Roy Jones Jr. of Pensacola, Fla. following their WBC light heavyweight championship fight at Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas, Nev. on Saturday, May 15. Jones, a future hall-of-fame fighter, had only been beaten once, by disqualification, in the 50 previous fights during the course of his 15-year pro career.



## Major League Baseball Standings

as of 05/16/04

### American League

#### East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	22	15	.595	-
Boston	22	16	.579	.5
Baltimore	18	16	.529	2.5
Toronto	16	22	.421	6.5
Tampa Bay	10	26	.278	11.5

#### Central Division

Minnesota	22	14	.611	-
Chicago	20	16	.556	2
Detroit	18	19	.486	4.5
Cleveland	17	19	.472	5
Kansas City	11	24	.314	10.5

#### West Division

Anaheim	25	13	.658	-
Texas	22	15	.595	3
Oakland	20	17	.541	5
Seattle	13	24	.351	12

### National League

#### East Division

Florida	21	16	.568	-
Philadelphia	19	16	.543	1
New York	18	20	.474	3.5
Atlanta	17	19	.472	3.5
Montreal	13	25	.342	8.5

#### Central Division

Chicago	22	15	.595	-
Houston	12	15	.595	-
Cincinnati	20	17	.541	2
St. Louis	20	18	.526	2.5
Milwaukee	19	18	.514	3
Pittsburgh	17	18	.486	4

#### West Division

Los Angeles	22	14	.611	-
San Diego	21	17	.553	2
Colorado	15	21	.417	7
San Francisco	15	23	.395	8
Arizona	14	23	.378	8.5

**Glossary** W: Wins, L: Losses, PCT: Winning Percentage, GB: Games Behind

### NBA PLAYOFFS

Sacramento 104

Minnesota 87

(Series tied 3-3)

Detroit 81

New Jersey 75

(Series tied at 3-3)

## TV GUIDE

	AFN ATLANTIC	AFN PACIFIC	AFN Sports	AFN Spectrum
18:00	I Spy/ Even Stevens	Tonight Show with Jay Leno/ The Late Show with David Letterman	NASCAR Nextel Cup Series - Chevy American Revolution 400 15:30	Shanghai Noon 17:00
19:00	Jeopardy/ Headline News	Access Hollywood 19:30	SportsCenter	The Wild Thornberrys/ Spongebob Squarepants
20:00	ESPNNews/ Headline News	The Seventh Sign	Baseball Tonight 20:30	The Simpsons/ The Cosby Show
21:00	60 Minutes	Batman Forever 21:30	AFL - Los Angeles Avengers @ New York Dragons 21:30	Average Joe
22:00	Cold Case			